

addresses in ecology or theology are presented at a more accessible level in other recent volumes such as *The Oxford Handbook of Nineteenth-Century Christian Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), for example. Mason's book, however specialized, is priced more toward a popular audience, and for this reason it may happily find its way onto more bookshelves across disciplinary divides.

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Ephraim Radner, *Church* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017), pp. vi + 193. ISBN 978-1-498-9709-7.

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Ephraim Radner acknowledges that ecclesiology is a late arrival at the theological party (the term was first coined in the 1830s). He also notes the irony that the truth of God is a relatively uncontroversial area compared with the ordering and decision-making of the earthly church, which has been a cause of no end of strife. Thus ecclesiology is 'a category invented to make sense of the conflicts of the Church, both internally and externally' (p. 19). Such a sanguine view pervades this impressive, engaging, erudite and sometimes brilliant study, characterized by its absorbing prose, ecumenical spirit, and cautious creativity.

'The Church is a people called and animated by God in Spirit to gather all peoples in Christ together in praise of their Creator' (p. 144). This may not seem a controversial definition, but it takes Radner till the last of seven chapters to get there; and by the time we get there he has ruminated helpfully on almost all the elements of this summary sentence. Don't be too taken by this gesture to Trinitarian configuration: he is sceptical about the social dimensions of Trinitarian thought about the church. Perhaps more telling is the characterization 'that the Church *is* the people that we see scripturally figured in Israel and Jesus, and that the Church's relationship with other peoples in her calling is figured there as well' (p. 145). Here we see the twin emphases of Radner's constructive argument – slow to emerge, but nuanced and attractive: on the one hand that we only know what church means in Israel and Jesus, and on the other hand that the church is fundamentally a people, more than it is, say, a body or a communion or any of up to 92 rival images.

Radner's emphasis on continuity with Israel is relentless, and his frequent citation of Old Testament passages (notably Obadiah, [pp. 135-36]) as bearing out God's relationship with the church is one of the most striking features of the book. Meanwhile his interest in the sociology and anthropology of nationhood, belonging, and establishing a sense of 'we-ness' in an individualized world is fascinating reading. Where these two themes – the figural role of Israel and Jesus, and the notion of peoplehood – come together is the strongest part of the book. Thus, 'The Church was not called to be *like* the nations, but to lead them into their own healing'. Facing squarely the fact that the Jews seem determined

not to be part of this new Israel, Radner puts things like this: ‘“Israel” has been divided for centuries, analogously to the split between Israel and Judah . . . after the reign of Solomon: there is a Christian part of Israel (“the Church”) and a Jewish part (“the Jews”)’ (p. 128). Thus relations between church and Jews are part of ecumenism. This seems to me exactly right, although I only detected one sentence explicitly addressing the State of Israel, which in this light seems insufficient. Nonetheless the treatment of the church and the nations as prefigured in Jacob and Esau is masterly and a perfect example of figural reading for today’s church. I was anticipating a fuller treatment of Mary as a figure for Israel and the church – a treatment that does finally come, in the last page or two of the book, but could surely have served an excellent ecumenical purpose if offered earlier and in greater depth.

Ecclesiology faces many challenges, and Radner covers almost all of them, not so much systematically, more like a traveller making his way on a journey towards a truer understanding. Thus we have the extensive and endemic divisions among the churches, which Radner treats with an even-handed and sympathetic wisdom. We have the persistence of Israel, which he navigates with a sure theological hand – although some may be taken aback at how unambiguously he maintains that evangelism toward the Jews is still appropriate. We have the church’s endless sinfulness, which is somewhat swept away as a theological inevitability. We have the genocidal tendencies that have long been almost inextricably linked with the church’s global missionary expansion; here he is perhaps over-reliant on Lamin Sanneh’s more balanced view. And we have the sheer incarnational ordinariness of the vast majority of the church’s regular life – a fact Radner acknowledges but to which he gives rather too little attention. Instead a tentatively prescriptive survey of key features of the church – mission, order, praise and so on – is taken into the constructive final chapter on the figure of the church – when surely it requires a chapter on its own. And while the overall emphasis on mission is commendable, there seems almost no reference to ministry whatsoever, with scarcely any reference to ordained ministry: the people’s shepherd seems on the whole to be Christ, mediated largely through Scripture.

I was delighted and moved at the way the book begins and ends with what it means to love the church – because Christ loves the church but ‘For us, to love the church is to *long*, that form of love whose grasp cannot match the reach of its hopes, and thus it waits in desire’ (p. 171). It’s one of many delicate touches that make the book so satisfying: another one being the way Radner switched from uppercase Church to lowercase church as he embarks on his somewhat sober survey, and switches back to uppercase Church for his proposal. But with the exception of faint hints in the closing pages, the one major problem of ecclesiology that isn’t addressed here is that of the eschatological delay; the New Testament, on the whole seems to regard the order of the church as highly provisional, and time has not proved that those provisional measures have been able to bear the weight of expectation and folly that have been placed upon them. The pilgrim element of peoplehood is noted by Radner, along with the flexibility required by the missionary imperative; but I’d like to hear more about the genuinely eschatological backdrop for every dimension of church and, at the same time, a clearer sense of the kingdom of God whose pursuit nuances the church’s conception of mission.

The most curious thing about the book is that Anglicanism in general, and the contemporary Anglican Communion in particular, is almost invisible in it. At one point Radner notes that ecclesiology often becomes ecclesiodicy – a justifying of the church in the face of heresy, sin and schism. He acerbically notes three possible answers: the Catholic one that says the Church is one – the rest is schism; the Protestant one that says there is no real visible church at all; and the liberal one that says ‘that Jesus is not really Lord of the Church but rather of something else, like the struggle for justice’ (p. 124). At another place Radner laments the fact that Anglicans are currently further apart from Catholics, Orthodox and Lutherans than for a long time, and attributes it, in a rare departure from the even temper of the book, to the way ‘Anglicans themselves, proud of their very ordering as a “communion”, have descended into a spectacular dynamic of mutual separation’ (p. 121). Now is perhaps not the time for Anglicans to offer their way as a superior *via media*, as they have often done; but the silence about Anglicanism in this book speaks perhaps louder than a whole chapter might have done.

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Bryan Stone, *Basel and the Church in England: 600 Years of Theological, Cultural and Political Connections* (Frankfurt a.m./London/New York: Public Book Media Verlag/Frankfurter Taschenbuchverlag, 2016), pp. 270. ISBN 978-3-86369-277-3, 978-0-85727-260-7.

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This book comes to us as part of the 500-year anniversary of the publication in Basel of the Erasmus edition of the Greek New Testament by the Basel printer Johannes Froben. The author is a life-long Anglican, born in England but resident in Basel since 1969 and is a Swiss citizen. As well as this he was a church warden in the Anglican parish in Basel for many years. This book is his contribution to the Erasmus celebration to focus on the long history of relations between Basel and the English church. The book is very interesting especially in two respects. It looks at connections between England and Basel from the perspective of Basel. In so doing it sheds a very particular light on matters that were usually viewed from the perspective of England. In so doing it touches on the Council of Basel (1431–49) called at the instigation of King Henry V of England and in which two English bishops participated but in the midst of controversy. A young secretary at the council, Enea Silvio Piccolomini later in 1460, as Pope Pius II, gave Basel the licence to establish a university. Erasmus later inscribed his name in the Matriculation book of the university and the first English student did so in 1471. Much later in 1967 a young Australian priest also signed the same very